



Afternoon Alert - Thursday, August 25, 2016

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HEADLINES

Noon news

NHK led with a report on the major earthquake that struck central Italy on Wednesday. All commercial networks gave top play to reports that a 16-year-old boy was arrested this morning on charges of killing another 16-year-old boy in Saitama, saying that the suspect told the police that he killed the boy because he “ignored” his text messages and phone calls.

INTERNATIONAL

UNSC fails to issue press statement condemning North Korea

NHK reported at noon that although the UNSC convened a closed-door urgent meeting on Wednesday in response to North Korea’s missile launch, the members failed to reach an agreement on whether to issue a press statement condemning North Korea due to reluctance on the part of China and other nations. The network said that although the U.S. is planning to show the draft statement to each member state, it remains to be seen whether the Security Council members will be able to jointly demonstrate a firm stance against the DPRK since China’s cautious stance stems from its opposition to the deployment of the U.S. military’s THAAD missile defense system in South Korea.

Latest DPRK missile launch signifies looming threat to U.S. mainland

On Wednesday’s SLBM launch by North Korea, Takushoku University Korea specialist Takesada said on an NHK program on Wednesday evening that the test appeared to be a success as the missile flew over 500 km. Calling SLBMs the “ultimate nuclear force” on account of the extremely sophisticated technology involved, the professor explained that Washington must be deeply alarmed

by the growing possibility of Pyongyang eventually possessing advanced expertise to deliver submarine launched nuclear missiles to the U.S. mainland. Projecting that the latest DPRK provocation will prompt Seoul to increase its missile defense cooperation with Washington, Kwansei Gakuin University scholar Hiraiwa noted that the launch was perhaps timed to coincide with the tripartite foreign ministerial meeting by Japan, China, and the ROK to cause disarray among them by inducing Beijing to step up its opposition to the U.S. military's planned THAAD deployment in South Korea.

Trump advisor says U.S. military to stay in Japan under Trump presidency

Yomiuri carried an interview with Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump's foreign policy advisor Michael Flynn, who noted that U.S. troops would continue to be deployed in Japan under a Trump presidency. "The U.S. -Japan alliance would be enhanced under President Trump," he said. "As the U.S. economy would be bolstered, the alliance would benefit." The former DOD official went on to say that more candid discussions would be held from the standpoint of "America first," adding that "the U.S. can't afford to continue shouldering the entire cost of maintaining troops abroad." Asked if a Republican administration would come to the defense of Japan if China attacked the Senkakus, Flynn said: "Irrespective of what Japan would have to do, the U.S. has to possess strong and swift response capabilities." Asked whether Trump would continue to extend the "nuclear umbrella" to Japan and South Korea and who should pay for it, the advisor said this should be decided based on careful discussions with friends.

Japan, Australia hold defense ministerial talks

Nikkei reported online that Defense Minister Inada met with her visiting Australian counterpart Payne this morning and confirmed enhanced bilateral and trilateral security cooperation with the U.S. In response to Inada's remarks expressing hope for deepening strategic partnership, Payne said: "Japan and Australia share issues of mutual concern on the security front. Both of us are concentrated on maintaining the order based on international law." The two ministers discussed holding a 2+2 foreign and defense ministerial meeting later this year.

Japan to open permanent mission in African Union

Yomiuri wrote that MOFA decided on Aug. 24 to establish a new permanent mission to the African Union in fiscal 2017. The ministry also plans to open two additional posts in Africa. The move is intended to counter China's growing economic and diplomatic influence in the region by demonstrating Japan's policy of attaching importance to Africa. MOFA plans to use the mission to strengthen cooperation with African nations on such issues as economic development and UN reform.

- **Ministerial meeting underscores shifting East Asian alliances** (Nikkei Asian Review)

- [Japan, China eye September summit amid territorial tensions](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Japan, China, South Korea leaders to meet later this year](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Gist of Japan-China-ROK foreign ministerial joint news conference, Aug. 24](#) (Nikkei)
- [Gist of Japan-China foreign ministerial, Aug. 24](#) (Nikkei)
- [Chinese FM avoids speaking Japanese, stresses Japan trip not “official visit”](#) (Nikkei)
- [Gist of Japan-ROK foreign ministerial, Aug. 24](#) (Nikkei)
- [Japan to limit money for ex-comfort women to specific needs](#) (Nikkei)
- [Editorial: Nuke ban becomes one step closer, but challenges remain](#) (The Mainichi)

SECURITY

Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga meets with Ginowan Mayor Sakima

NHK reported this afternoon that Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga met with Ginowan Mayor Sakima at the Kantei this morning and explained the planned renovation work at Futenma Air Station by the MOD. According to the network, Mayor Sakima told Suga: “We are concerned that the base will remain in its current location indefinitely. The renovation work must never lead to the installation becoming a permanent fixture.” In response, Suga reportedly said: “We will continue to work to realize the return of the Futenma base as soon as possible, remove the danger at the base, and reduce the base-hosting burden on Okinawa. The renovation is the minimum work needed to maintain safe flight operations at the base.” Suga also reportedly said that the GOJ will make efforts to remove local concerns by providing thorough explanations of the work.

Tensions continue at helipad construction site at Northern Training Area

Mainichi reported on the continued conflict between local protesters and riot police at the helipad construction site in the Northern Training Area in Okinawa that started when the GOJ resumed the construction work there about a month ago. The paper highlighted the forcible removal of two Okinawa reporters on Aug. 20 and the arrest of one protester on Aug. 24. The paper also wrote that local residents are becoming increasingly angry and concerned about the commotion. A farmer was quoted as saying: “We don’t want helipads to be constructed in our neighborhood because the Ospreys are noisy, but it will probably be difficult to stop construction that was decided by the central government.”

In a related story, the Okinawa Times led with the finding that Higashi Mayor Iju has conveyed to the Okinawa Defense Bureau twice his opposition to the use of a community road by vehicles involved in helipad construction on account of the “inconvenience” to local farms due to the turmoil associated with protests. Because the road is the only way to transport construction materials, the daily speculated that the construction work may be delayed considerably as the bureau may need to find an alternate route.

- [SDF to launch exercises for “kaketsuke-keigo”](#) (Asahi)
- [Analyzing North Korea’s SLBMs](#) (Mainichi)
- [Editorial: Delay in relocation will result in Futenma remaining in place](#) (The Japan News)
- [Okinawa demands stricter law enforcement of fishing boats near Senkakus](#) (Ryukyu Shimpo)
- [Draft second FY16 extra budget allocates 67.4 billion yen for island security](#) (Okinawa Times)
- [400 million yen earmarked for Okinawa security patrols in second FY16 extra budget](#) (Okinawa Times)

POLITICS

- [Prime minister’s schedule on August 24](#) (Nikkei)
- [Gist of Japan-China-ROK foreign ministerial joint news conference, Aug. 24](#) (Nikkei)
- [Abe favors convening extra Diet session “as soon as possible”](#) (Mainichi)
- [Hiroko Ota tapped as chair of new Council for Regulatory Reform](#) (Nikkei)
- [Ex-FM Maehara to run in DP presidential race](#) (Mainichi Evening edition)
- [Cartoon: Renho and Okada](#) (Asahi)

ECONOMY

- [Former U.S. Ambassador Roos is Japan’s ticket into Silicon Valley](#) (Nikkei)
- [Two-stage economic measures rely on boost from public works](#) (Nikkei)

SCIENCE

- [Taiji fishermen worried Sea Shepherd's settlement means more trouble for them](#) (The Mainichi)
- [AI in applicant screening and employee performance review](#) (Mainichi)

EDUCATION

- [Asian students finish cross-cultural summer science course in Yokosuka](#) (The Japan Times)

TV PROGRAMS

Student loan crisis

NHK's "Close-up Gendai Plus" reported on Wednesday evening that one-fifth of the approximately 80,000 university students who drop out of school every year do so because of financial problems. The program said those who drop out of school are unable to land steady jobs and are unable to repay their student loans. According to the program, one of the reasons for this is the increasing number of people who get married later in life, saying that elderly parents are often unable to pay their children's college tuition so the students are forced to work part time to pay their own way. The program explained that a growing number of students are unable to attend university because of financial problems.



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